

Duty to Immigrants

Foreign Born Mother and Her Little Ones
Americanization Committee Will Try to

Teach Them American Standards and American Ideals and Help to Make Them Real Americans



Group Around a City Refuse Cart on Barren Island—Not an Inspiring Environment for Young American Citizens and Their Immigrant Mothers



An Immigrant Kept in a Full of Water All Day Because of a Better View

Mr. Vincent Astor's Baby Who Was Kept in a Full of Water All Day Because of a Better View

grant women in terms of practical housekeeping. Many an immigrant woman doesn't even know what an American dustpan is. In Europe she was used to doing her cleaning by throwing a pail of water over the stone court, and so she does the same thing in her "flat" here, and wonders why her neighbor below objects, and why the agent comes to threaten her with eviction if she does it again.

The visitors will show the women how to cook, how to sew, why the children will get along better with buttonholes than with pins, why window screens are important, why the children should not sleep in close rooms covered with pillows—and a hundred other things of direct importance to the life of that immigrant family. They will take the women to market, show them how and what to buy, explaining the puzzling American money—and the need of saving some of it!

The National Americanization Committee is prepared to help every community that needs such help in its work. It has just secured the services of Dr. Caroline Hedger, of Chicago, one of the promoters and for years at the head of the Chicago Baby Welfare Campaign, to supervise the starting of such work in immigrant communities through the country and help direct and standardize it. She is also to be in charge of a new division for educational work among immigrant women to be started by the United States Bureau of Education.

Out in California the Board of Education has already been doing this work. It has appointed domestic educators, and is following out the work in co-operation with the California Commission of Immigration and Housing. And Boston, through its public school system, is now planning afternoon classes for immigrant women. It is the business of the public schools to produce good American citizens. And making immigrant women into good American housewives (and incidentally teaching them English) and making their homes American homes is a necessary part of the work of the public school system in every community with an immigrant population. Many of our schools already have equipment for domestic science and sewing and other forms of "household arts." These "arts" should be extended to the homes of immigrants, where certainly they will do as much as they could do anywhere else to maintain American standards of living and form an appropriate background for American citizens.

How to End the Menace of the Hyphenated American

Even in places where public schools have not this rather advanced equipment and cannot get taxpayers to pay for nurses and teachers, other social agencies, such as women's clubs and libraries and welfare societies and churches, would gladly co-operate, giving space and money and volunteer teachers to make the plan possible—until the public school system sees where the work really belongs.

In spite of the decrease in immigration, the necessity for this kind of Americanizing is going to be, perhaps, even greater this year than it has been before. The sudden growth of communities about munitions plants and factories and the great increase in property values will raise two very important questions: How to provide decent moral and living conditions in these homes that are built overnight and how to teach the mothers their duties and the fathers how to invest their savings in American homes and land. If they are to become citizens they will be the more loyal for a real American stake in the bank or in a home.

Sometimes, of course, immigrants save too much. Dr. Hedger has told us of how an immigrant mother beats the children when their shoes wear out, because it means taking money from the board, and how mothers have been known to half starve not only their children but

themselves in order to hoard a little more every week. The difficulty is they do not know on what things to save and where to spend.

The National Americanization Committee is going to join hands with the American Bankers' Association in its thrift campaign and carry it into the immigrants' homes. But it is the women who save, and it is useless to put ideas and appeals even into pay envelopes unless they are made intelligible to the woman who buys the supplies, mends the clothes and is in charge of the savings generally.

It is a sound principle that when the immigrant has a little home (if it is a real return on his investment and not a real estate dealer's opportunity) or a little property or money in America, he has, in a way, cast his material lot in America. The effect is good. It has a pretty direct connection with the whole sense of belonging and with citizenship. The immigrant mother will be a real factor in bringing this about—if she can be shown how.

American Women's Mistaken Ideas of Their Duty

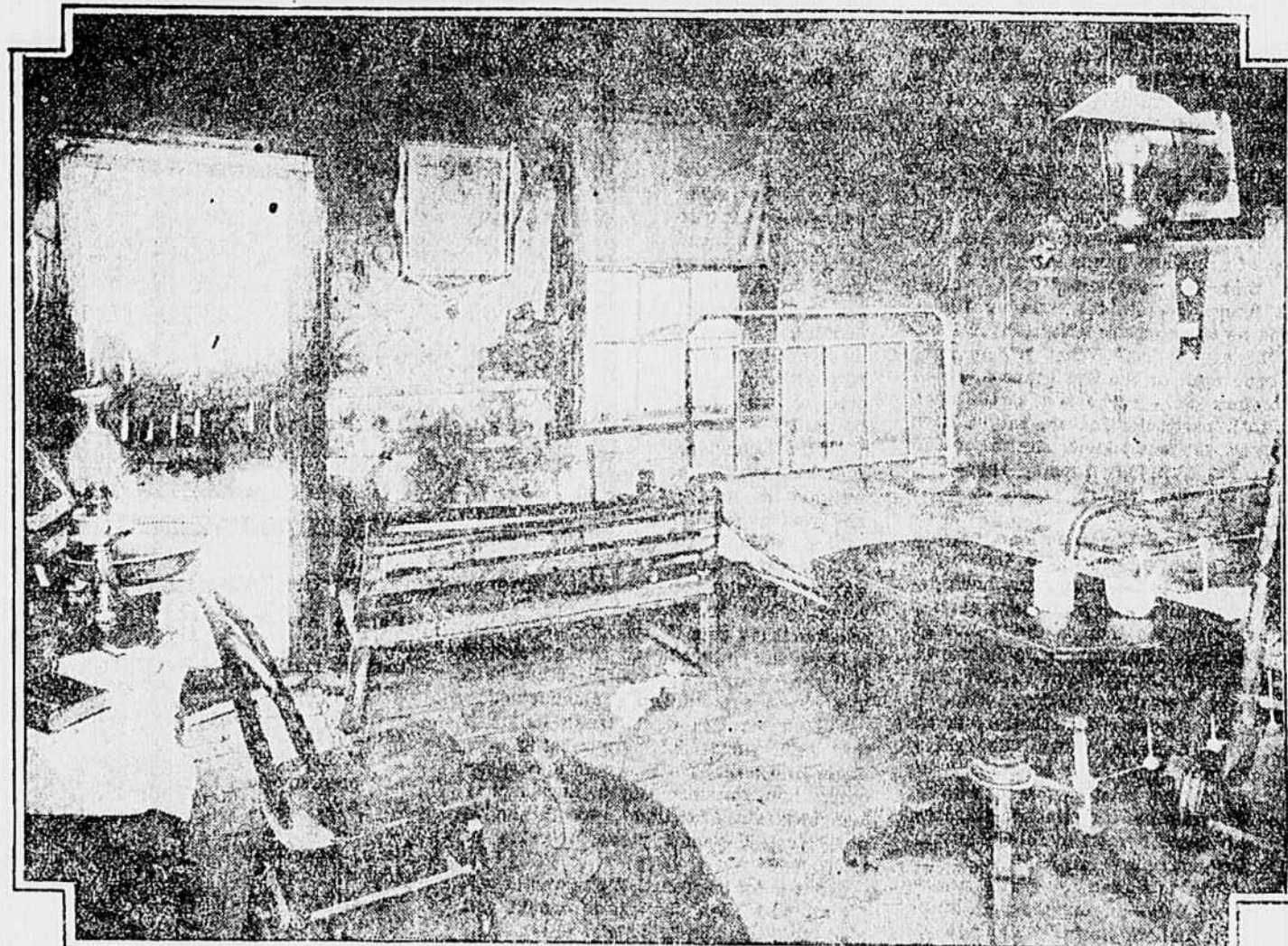
The National Americanization Committee appeals to American-born women throughout the country to aid in the Americanization of our foreign-born women by helping us to give them an American standard of living, and to provide domestic educators to show them the way to this standard. But the friendly visiting cannot be left entirely to the domestic educators!

If each American woman with her full opportunities and resources undertook to see that four immigrant families were made into good Americans, race prejudices and race divisions would soon be things of the past. And such problems as unemployment, illiteracy, excessive infant mortality, and perhaps petty crime would be greatly lessened.

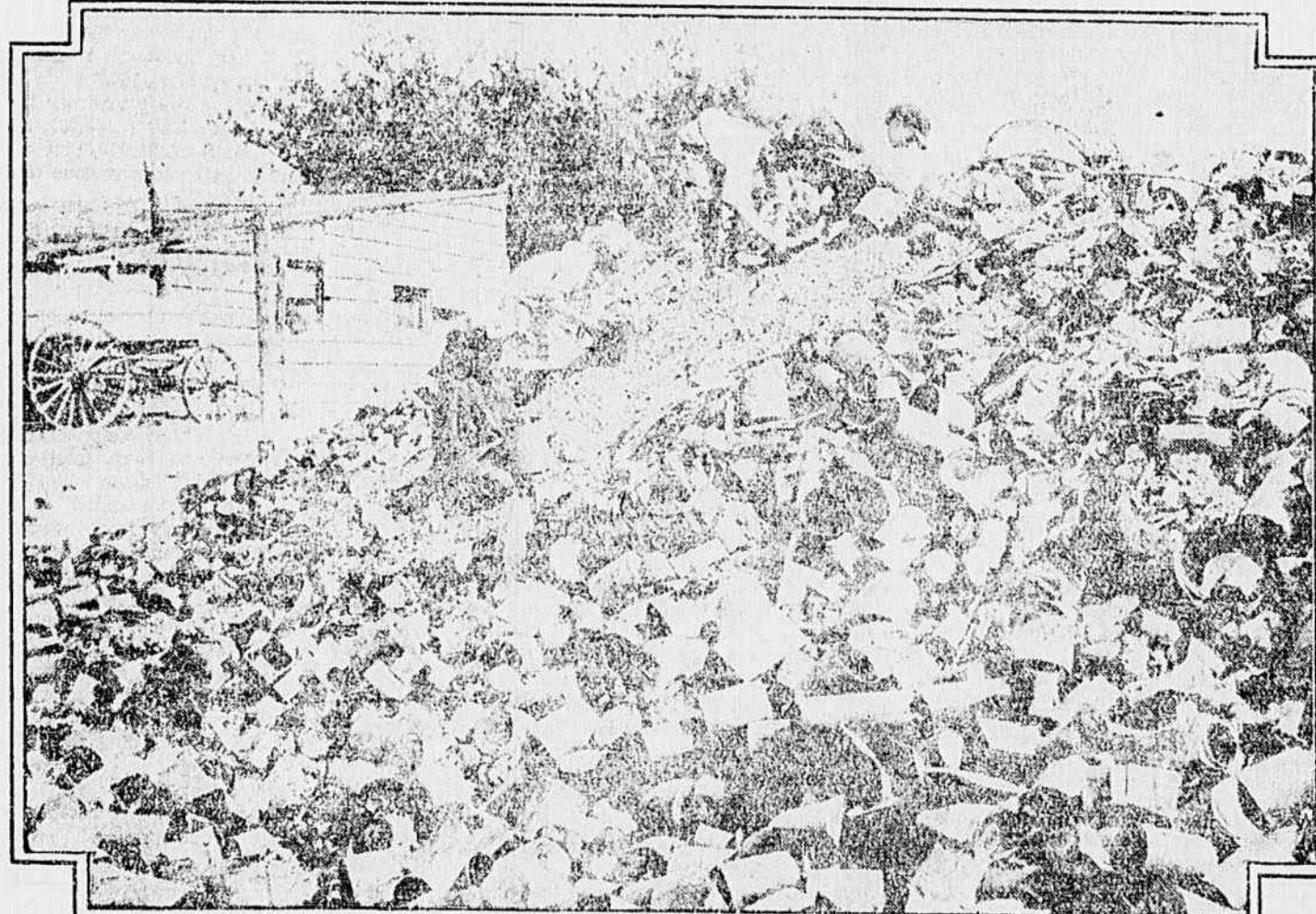
This work of Americanization is going to depend largely for its success upon the assistance contributed by individuals, in their own way. The assimilation of our immigrant population and the unifying of America is not in the last analysis an organization matter at all. We shall hardly fulfill our patriotic duty to America, our Christian duty to women and our ideal of ourselves solely by "organized effort." We have been rather prone to believe that we can meet all our responsibilities to our neighbors and to society if we are members of committees, if we are hosts at entertainments, if we buy tickets for a benefit, if we attend a course of lectures on immigration, if we are on a board of charity—anything so long as we do it in the company of others.

It becomes respectable and entertaining and furnishes an excellent dinner topic. We thus secure the satisfaction of acquitting our responsibility to our fellow men by buying a ticket to a benefit, and our satisfaction in an excellent evening of dancing with a good orchestra. The values are pretty well mixed. This organized service leads us into bribery and deceit, extravagance and waste, because we seldom know the exact end attained, or the disposal of our funds. Treasurers do not account to purchasers and sometimes not to the beneficiaries. Why not go back to some of the simple Christian virtues and to more individual work? The immigrant neighbor is a good starting point.

And in addition to this women can contribute in no better way to the patriotic movement that is sweeping over our country now. Never more than now has the spirit of America been aroused. As the Americanization movement develops in many communities of the country, the Americanization of immigrant homes and the promotion of American standards of living everywhere will become increasingly important. It is work that women are well fitted to do, and that all American women will want to help do.



This Is a Typical Home of an Immigrant Family Visited by Mrs. Vincent Astor—Not the Best Sort of Fountain Head for Patriotic American Citizenship



Searching the "City Dump"—Mrs. Astor Suggests That the Women of America Might Well Give Attention to the Little Future American Citizens and Find Something Better for Them to Do (These Photographs Are by Jessie Tarbox Beals)

The National Americanization Committee, and What It Is Trying to Do

THE National Americanization Committee was born at a dinner given by Mrs. Vincent Astor at her home, No. 122 East Seventy-eighth street, in New York, October 16 last. Twenty-five prominent Americans, interested in patriotic and humanitarian movements, were present. An organization whose guiding principles are three fold—"America first," "the English language first" and "efficiency"—was the result.

The chief aims of the committee were declared to be:

To promote loyalty to the United States.
To facilitate the nationalization of foreign-born and native-born citizens.

To unite foreign-born and native-born citizens in training camps.

To promote the general use of the English language in this country.

To conserve the labor supply and prevent labor wars.

To bring about these much-to-be-desired ends it was

proposed to form classes for instruction in the English language and in the duties and responsibilities of citizenship.

It was also proposed to work in connection with government institutions and colleges for the training of immigrant workers.

President Nicholas Murray Butler, of Columbia College, announced a course in training of adult immigrants for citizenship will be added to the curriculum of that university. President Hadley, of Yale, and President Wheeler, of the University of California, approved the aims of the committee, and especially in so far as collegiate extension work for the education of immigrants in English and citizenship is concerned. Public meetings and conferences for the furtherance of the committee's plans were considered. Posters of striking design, including the motto, "America First," were declared to be a desirable medium of propaganda.

and it was determined that 75,000 of these should be displayed in stores, factories, school libraries and post offices throughout the country. A working fund of \$100,000 it was decided would be necessary, and \$25,000 of the amount was subscribed during the evening. The rest, it was announced, was assured.

Frank Trumbull, a director of the Chesapeake & Ohio Railroad, was elected chairman and Miss Frances A. Kellor vice-chairman. These with Percy R. Fyne, second vice-president, Mrs. Vincent Astor, Mrs. Cornelius Vanderbilt, Mrs. Edward T. Stotesbury, William Fellows Morgan, Felix M. Warburg and William Sprout constituted the official board and executive committee. D. P. Claxton, Federal Commissioner of Education, State Commissioner of Education John H. Finley, Commissioner of Education Frederick C. Howe, David R. Francis, former Governor of Missouri, Thomas A. Edison, Mayor John Purroy Mitchell, Dr. Abraham Jacob, Clarence H. Mackay, Robert Bacon, Henry P. Davidson, Myron T. Herrick, John H. Moore,

of the United States Navy; Rodman Wanamaker, General Leonard Wood and Benjamin Lide Wheeler are among the members of the committee.

Offices have been opened at No. 20 West Thirty-fourth street, and the work is being vigorously pushed. Mrs. Vincent Astor, the bride of one of America's wealthiest and most patriotic and public spirited young men, and herself a member of the Dinsmore and Huntington families, among the oldest in America, paid a visit to Barren Island to investigate conditions of immigrant labor. Among the dumps of that desolate region, where the city's garbage is dumped, and peopled chiefly by immigrants, laborers and their families, she studied the lowest stratum of life in America.

There she had photographs taken of the phases of that life that most poignantly impressed her, especially of the babe whose mother kept it sitting all day in a tub of water because it was a warm day. Her impressions of that visit and her deductions therefrom appear in the article she has written for this newspaper.